GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
PANCHAYATI RAJ
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:3201
ANSWERED ON:03.08.2017
Basic Amenities in Panchayats
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Will the Minister of PANCHAYATI RAJ be pleased to state:

a) whether the Government has reviewed the basic amenities provided to Panchayats with a view to improving the standard of living in villages in the country;
b) if so, the details thereof;
c) whether certain States have failed to utilize the funds allocated for the purpose;
d) if so, the reasons therefor along with the steps taken by the Government in this regard; and
e) the steps being taken by the Government for the empowerment of Panchayats along with the details of future action plan in this regard?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PANCHAYATI RAJ
(SHRI PARSHOTTAM RUPALA)

(a) & (b) : Panchayat being a State subject, it is for the concerned State Government to endow Panchayats with such powers and authority to enable them to function as institutions of self-government and implement schemes for economic development and social justice including providing basic amenities to improve the standard of living in villages of the country.

Under the Fourteenth Finance Commission (FFC), Rs. 2,00,292.20 crore have been allocated to the Gram Panchayats constituted under Part IX of the Constitution in 26 States, amounting to an assistance of Rs. 488 per capita/ annum at an aggregate level for the award period 2015-20, for delivering basic services including water supply, sanitation including septic management, sewerage and solid waste management, storm water drainage, maintenance of community assets, maintenance of roads, footpaths and street-lighting, and burial and cremation grounds, and any other basic service within the functions assigned to them under relevant legislations, creation of reliable data base of local bodies' receipts & expenditure through audited accounts and for improvement of own source revenue. The FFC funds are expected to improve the living conditions of the people in the rural areas as these relate to the provision of basic services and other essential infrastructure for the people in the villages.

The State-wise total allocation and release under FFC award to the Panchayats during 2015-16, 2016-17 and 2017-18 (till 31.07.2018) are given at Annexure.

(c) & (d): The funds are devolved to Gram Panchayats as grants. States are required to furnish certificate of transfer of the grants to the Gram Panchayats within the specified time limit of fifteen days or payment of penal interest for the delayed period to be eligible to draw the next installment of grants. After the receipt of fund from the Central Government, States have transferred the fund to Gram Panchayats for utilization.
Ministry of Finance (MoF) guidelines dated 08.10.2015 enjoin upon States to constitute a High Level Monitoring Committee (HLMC) headed by Chief Secretary for monitoring and concurrent evaluation of local bodies and to ensure that funds are utilized for the purpose recommended by the FFC. Ministry of Panchayati Raj (MoPR) has constituted a Coordination Committee under the Secretary, Panchayati Raj to inter-alia guide and support States and local bodies in the implementation of FFC recommendations, monitor progress of expenditure of grants by local bodies and suggest remedial measures, if needed.
(e) : The Ministry, under the scheme of Rashtriya Gram Swaraj Abhiyan (RGSA)/ Capacity Building-Panchayat Sashaktikaran Abhiyan (CB-PSA) [erstwhile scheme of Rajiv Gandhi Panchayat Sashaktikaran Abhiyan (RGPSA)] has been providing financial and technical support to the states for Capacity Building and Training (CB&T) of elected representatives of Panchayati Raj Institutions with focus on Gram Panchayat Development Plan (GPDP) so as to enable them to discharge their mandated functions effectively. Panchayat Enterprise Suite (PES) applications have been developed by the Ministry to cater to various aspects of Panchayats' functioning including planning, budgeting, implementation, accounting, monitoring, social audit and delivery of citizen services. Ministry has also organized strategic workshops for sharing of best practices in Panchayats across states.
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